

Talk of the Town



December 2002

A periodic newsletter to keep the legal community informed about news concerning the Clerk of the Court's Office

Court cases will have a number of things in common beginning in '03

An important issue that the Clerk's Office has been actively involved in over the past few years is the development of a Common Case Numbering System for criminal cases amongst all County Criminal Justice Agencies.

The office has been working with other government entities to create a system in which each agency would use the same case number for a criminal case as it

flows through the court system. The concept behind the effort is that the case number would be consistent in every agency and in every stage of the case.

As it is now, a given case has a different number assigned to identify it in each agency it flows through.

But that will change in 2003, thanks to the efforts of the Criminal Justice Agencies and the Integrated Criminal Justice Information System (ICJIS) Project Team, whose common goal has led to a new Common Case Number System (CCN) that will be implemented at the beginning of the calendar year.

- The new format of the case number will be:
- A two-digit alpha case type prefix – CR or LC;
- A four-digit year designator – 2003;
- A six-digit case number – 123456;
- A three-digit defendant identifier – 001;
- In addition, there will be a two-digit alpha location identifier following the number to tell the facility where the case is assigned, such as SE; and
- The number will display and print as follows: CR2003-123456-001 SE.

Among the benefits of implementing CCN are: it will reduce duplicate manual data entry in the various agency systems, reduce data entry errors, reduce delay in case flow and case processing and facilitate the ease of case initiation, update, query and termination, among many other things.

The benefits of the implementation of the CCN to the Clerk's Office are:

- With each defendant having a unique identifier as part of the number, it will be possible to have an individual case file for each defendant.
- One case file per defendant is beneficial to those reviewing the file: Customers; Disposition Reporting; Appeals; Financial Services; and others.
- Docket entries can be sorted by defendant, which also aids research in cases; and
- Future electronic data feeds from and to other systems, including: File-ACase; Sentencing; Dispositions; Appeals; Lower Court Appeals; and Attorney Appointments/Assignments.

The ups and downs of fees

As a result of both federal and state legislative actions, some court fees went up while others went down in August. Following is a list of the fees that were impacted by these actions:



Passport Fees

- **First-time adult passport issuance** increased from \$60 to \$85;
- **Minors under 16** increased from \$40 to \$70;
- **Adult renewal passport** fees increased from \$40 to \$55;
- **Expedited service** increased from \$35 to \$60; and
- **Petition or Application for Adoption** went from \$105 to No Charge.

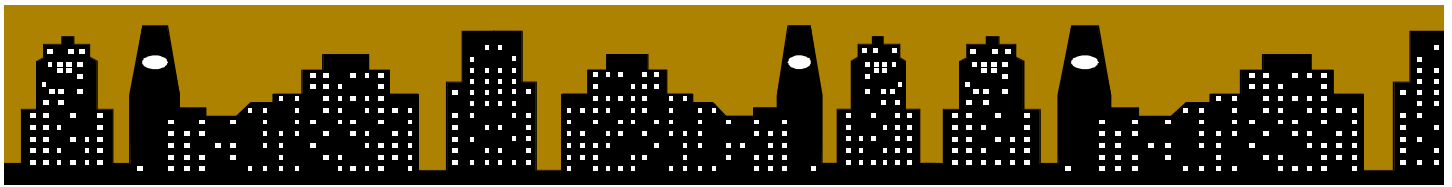
Juvenile Court Fees

- **Contested Adoption** went from \$90 to No Charge; and
- **Petition for Application for Adoption on a Child who is Current Ward of the Court in the Care, Custody and Control of DES** went from \$45 to No Charge.

Family Court Fees

- **Petition for Dissolution of Marriage** went from \$231 to \$236;
- **Response or Initial Appearance in Dissolution** went from \$186 to \$191;
- **Petition for Legal Separation** went from \$231 to \$236;

Continued on the back page... Fees

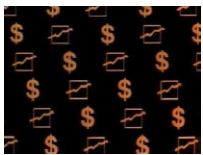


New Year brings new options

by Michael K. Jeanes,
Clerk of the Superior Court

The Clerk's Office will begin the New Year by changing some of the financial services presently offered, which will provide more options and convenience for customers.

The first change, effective January 1, 2003, occurs in the area of Fee Deferrals. Superior Court's Presiding Judge



Colin Campbell signed an order that standardizes and improves this procedure for the cus-

tomers and the Court. The law allows individuals who are financially unable to pay their court fees to request a Fee Deferral (the fee is not paid at the time of filing, but at a later date). Under the new process, the customer makes the deferral request which then is considered under the new standards.

The order establishes strict guidelines, based on the U.S. Poverty Guidelines, to help determine the need for a Fee Deferral. It also presents court officials with different options based on certain criteria to determine a payment schedule.

The new payment options, which relate to poverty guidelines, are:

- A full fee deferral is given until the case is completed; then the court determines what fees will be paid, if any. This option is given to applicants whose income does not exceed 150% of the established poverty guidelines.
- \$10 per month is paid until the amount is paid in full. This option is given to applicants whose income is greater than 150% but less than 175% of the established poverty guidelines.
- Twenty-five percent of the fee is paid upfront, and the remaining amount is paid over the next three months. This option is given to applicants whose

income is greater than 175% but less than 225% of the established poverty guidelines.

- The full amount is paid at the time of filing. This payment method occurs when the applicant's income is greater than 225% of the established poverty guidelines. In this case, the full payment is required at the time of filing and the applicant's request for a fee deferral is denied.

A review procedure by a judicial officer is established for exceptional cases.

Requests for deferrals are accepted at Window 9 in the Central Court Building (Phoenix), at the Filing Counter in the Southeast Regional Center in Mesa, at the Filing Counter in the Northwest Regional Center in Surprise, and at the Filing Counter in the Old Courthouse in Downtown Phoenix.

The Clerk of the Court now accepts bank issued credit cards (Visa/Mastercard) as a form of payment for fee deferrals.

Another new service the Clerk's Office will begin offering shortly is expanding the credit card payment option to customers at its Customer Service Center, located at 601 W. Jackson, Phoenix. This new service will allow customers to pay for their copies of court records, marriage licenses, and the Clerk's portion of the passport application fee with a credit card. For the past several years, the Office has only accepted a limited number of credit card transactions only relating to its phone customers.

The final phase of the credit card payment option will be rolling it out to the service counters at all Office locations, allowing customers to pay for various fees. It is projected that this phase will be implemented in 2003.

Do you have a suggestion?

To further improve service, the Clerk's Office has created an Electronic Suggestion Box on its website to provide customers the opportunity to submit suggestions or feedback about the office and its services.



The Suggestion Box can be accessed by visiting the Clerk's Office's website at www.clerkofcourt.maricopa.gov. A Survey Window will appear when the user exits the website. The survey invites users to rate the service they received and provide any comments on ways to improve the service.

Fees continued

...from front page

- **Response or Initial Appearance in Legal Separation** went from \$186 to \$191;
- **Petition for Annulment** went from \$231 to \$236; and
- **Response to Petition for Annulment** went from \$186 to \$191;

An updated Fee Schedule is available on the Clerk's website at www.clerkofcourt.maricopa.gov under the "Fees" title on the homepage. To view the new passport fees and passport information, please click on the "Passports" title on the homepage.

Talk of the Town. Published periodically by the Clerk of the Superior Court's Communications Office for the legal community. Contact the Office, Central Court Building, 201 W. Jefferson, Phoenix, Ariz. 85003
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